

FACT SHEET ON HIPDB INVESTIGATIVE SEARCHES

Background of the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

The Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) was established to combat fraud and abuse in health insurance and health care delivery. Registered entities query the HIPDB using the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS). The HIPDB can provide detailed information on prior criminal or fraudulent behavior that can be used to:

- Prepare for a trial or hearing.
- Improve investigative work.
- Assist with case selection.
- Assist in sentencing recommendations.

For more information on the HIPDB, see the *Fact Sheet on the HIPDB*, available on the NPDB-HIPDB home page, located at www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov.

Investigative Search Capability

A key feature of the IQRS is an investigative search capability of HIPDB information. The investigative search capability permits browser-style searches that typically contain less identifying information than the standard structured queries available to non-law enforcement entities.

To execute an investigative search, access the IQRS by clicking **Go to the IQRS** on the NPDB-HIPDB home page. On the *Login* screen, enter your Data Bank Identification Number (DBID), User ID, and User Password into the corresponding fields and click **Login**. The *Entity Registration Confirmation* screen displays the most current data that the Data Banks have on file for your entity. On the *Options* screen, select **Query**. Federal law enforcement entities with HIPDB rights only will proceed immediately to the *Select Query Type* screen (Figure 1) where they may select **Investigative Search**. All other authorized entities will proceed from the *Options* screen to the *Select A Payment Method* screen after choosing **Query**. If your entity does not have an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) account on file with the HIPDB, select the credit card option and provide a credit card number and expiration date. By law, Federal entities are not charged for HIPDB queries. Federal law enforcement entities registered for the NPDB and the HIPDB will see the *Select a Payment Method* screen after selecting **Query**. If you wish to perform an investigative search, you must enter payment information to proceed; however, you will **NOT** be charged for any investigative searches.

On the *Select Query Type* screen, select **Investigative Search**. The *Search Purpose* screen will display after you select **Query**. Indicate the purpose of the search from the displayed options. Choose whether you wish to query on individual or organization subjects on the *Investigative Search Type* screen, then provide identifying information to help narrow the search on the *Individual (Organization) Investigative Search* screen.

You have the option of performing either a full text search or a field search. In a full text search, provide words or phrases for which the IQRS will search in the text of all reports in the HIPDB. Reports that contain these search words will result in a match. Reports that contain words related to the search words, such as synonyms and antonyms, will also result in a match. For a field search, complete any or all of the labeled fields and a search is conducted based on this input. The fields that may be searched include:

- Last, First, and Middle Name.
- City, State, and Zip Code.
- Date of Birth.
- Social Security Number (SSN) (without dashes or spaces).
- Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) (without dashes or spaces).
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Number.
- State License Number.
- Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN).
- National Provider Identifier (NPI) Number.
- Unique Physician Identification Number (UPIN).

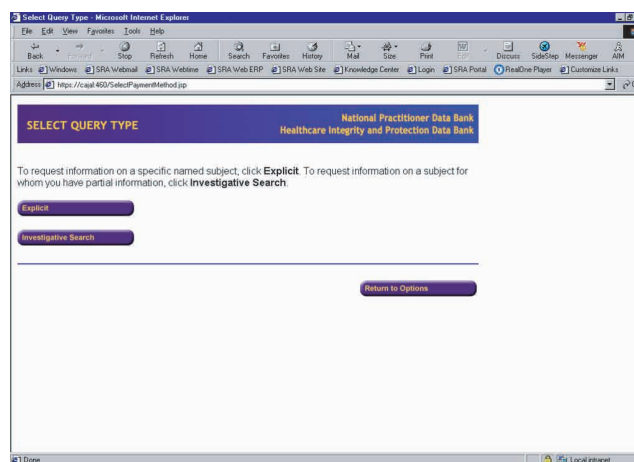


Figure 1. Select Query Type Screen

You may also perform a combined full text and field search. To perform a combined search, enter search words in both the Full Text Search box and one or more of the Field boxes to combine the capabilities described above. Several wildcard characters and special symbols may be used to assist the search. For specific details about these characters and symbols, select **Help** on the *Investigative Search* screen.

Once you have entered its search criteria, select **Search** at the bottom of the screen. Entities are charged based on the number of searches performed, not on the number of search results or reports viewed. Each time you click **Search**, a charge of \$10 is assessed. Federal agencies are exempt by law from this fee.

Search Results

The *Search Results* screen displays a list of the reports that matched the search words provided. The total number of reports that matched displays at the top of the screen, followed by a summary of the first 15 reports that matched. The summaries are ranked according to the match score, with the highest score at the top of the list. Because of the scoring algorithm, reports on the same subject may not follow one another on the list. In fact, all reports on the same practitioner may not even be contained in the list, depending on the search words and the data in the reports.

From left to right, the fields displayed are:

- The order of the report in the list.
- The match score.
- The report type.
- The subject name.
- The date of birth for individual subjects.
- Either field of licensure, occupation (*Judgment Or Conviction Report* (JOCR) only), or specialty (*Medical Malpractice Payment Report* (MMPR) only).

Each report in the list is given a score based on the number of search words that match words in the report, as well as

words that are related to the search words. If all of your search words match, then the match score is 100. If only one of your search terms matches and the others are only similar, lower scores are assigned. Scoring is also affected by the order and proximity of the matched terms within the reports, as well as their frequency. For example, reports that contain the same search term several times may have the same score, but the one with the search terms clustered more closely may receive a higher score.

If you wish to view a detailed report, click on the report summary in the list. The detailed summary shows a JOCR, MMER, or *Adverse Action Report* in its entirety. The **Go to Best Hit** link at the top of the page will scroll to the words in the report that most closely match one of the search words. Matched words display in bright red and similar words in lesser shades of red. Each report contains a **Back to Document List** link at the bottom, which will return you to the query results screen.

Troubleshooting

If you receive no results from your investigative search, check to see that only the fields you wish to search are completed. Also, make sure to use the **Clear** button when adjusting a query or creating a new query. If you experience a HIPDB Interactive Error, the most likely cause is a timed-out search session. If no activity is recorded on the system for a period of time, the connection is terminated for security purposes. In this case, you must return to the *Login* screen (click **End Session & Return to Login**) and re-enter your DBID, User ID, and User Password in the corresponding fields. An Interactive Error may also occur when the system is unavailable for routine maintenance or backups.

NPDB-HIPDB Assistance

For additional information, visit the NPDB-HIPDB Web site at www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov. If you need assistance, contact the NPDB-HIPDB Customer Service Center by e-mail at npdb-hipdb@sra.com or by phone at 1-800-767-6732 (TDD 703-802-9395). Information Specialists are available to speak with you weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (5:30 p.m. on Fridays) Eastern Time. The NPDB-HIPDB Customer Service Center is closed on all Federal holidays.